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Amendments to the Claims

Please amend the claims as follows:

1.   (Currently amended) A method ~~for outputting recommended preferences~~ to be
executed on a computer system, wherein the computer system includes a processor, a
database, a first input device and an output device, and wherein the database includes
a plurality of datafiles each containing a plurality of predetermined preferences, the
method comprising:

    ~~accepting~~ receiving signals from the first input device ~~to~~ that indicate at least one
of a plurality of user preferences;

    comparing at least a subset of the user preferences against the plurality of
datafiles in the database to identify matching datafiles, each matching datafile
containing preferences matching at least a threshold number of the indicated user
preferences;

    selecting preferences from the identified datafiles, wherein the selected
preferences do not match the user preferences; and

    outputting, via the output device, the selected preferences.

2.   (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the preferences comprise artists'
names.

3.   (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the preferences comprise movie titles.

4.   (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the computer system
further includes a data communications network, and a second ~~user~~ input device,
wherein the processor, database, second ~~user~~ input device and the output device are
coupled to the network, and wherein the first and second ~~user~~ input devices are
remotely located from each other.

5.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein selecting preferences
further comprises:

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for each non-matching preference in the identified datafiles, determining a number of other preferences in the identified datafiles that match the non-matching preference and assigning the determined number to the preference; and

selecting one or more non-matching preferences with the highest assigned numbers.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the number of preferences in a datafile is limited to 10, and wherein the first threshold number is 5.

7. (Previously presented) The method of claim 5, wherein the number of preferences in a datafile is limited to 10, and wherein only those unmatching preferences that also appear in 50% or more of the identified data files are selected.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently amended) A method for recommending music selections based on a user's preferred music selections, the method comprising:

storing a plurality of associated music selections in a database;

~~accepting~~ receiving signals from an input device ~~to~~ that indicate a plurality of a user's preferred music selections;

determining that a number of the preferred music selections match with the plurality of associated music selections in the database;

determining a number of unmatched associated music selections in the database; and

outputting, via an output device, the unmatched associated music selections.

10. (Previously presented) An apparatus for recommending music selections based on a user's preferred music selections, the apparatus comprising:

a computer system including a database;

means for storing a plurality of associated music selections in the database;

means for accepting signals from a user input device to indicate a plurality of a user's preferred music selections;

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means for determining that a number of the preferred music selections match with the associated music selections in the database; and

means for determining a number of unmatched associated music selections in the database.

11.   (Currently amended) A method for outputting an ordered list of recommended objects based on an input object, the method comprising:

storing pairs of ranked objects in a database;

assigning a ranking number to each of the pairs of ranked objects and storing the ranking number in association with the pair;

~~accepting~~ receiving signals from an input device ~~to~~ that indicate an object;

using a processor to find occurrences of the indicated~~selected~~ object in the pairs of ranked objects;

for each pair in which the indicated ~~selected~~ object occurs, determining a non-matching object in the pair that does not match the indicated~~selected~~ object;

ordering non-matching objects into a list according to the ranking number for the pair that the non-matching object belongs to; and

outputting the list as an ordered list of recommended objects.

12.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein each object comprises an artist's name.

13.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein each object comprises a title of a movie.

14.   (Currently amended) An apparatus for outputting an ordered list of recommended objects based on an input object, the apparatus comprising:

a processor;

a database accessible to the processor;

pairing means for storing pairs of ranked objects in the database;

ranking means for assigning a ranking number to each of the pairs of ranked objects and storing a given ranking number in association with a given stored pair;

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    Input means for ~~accepting signals~~receiving an indication from a human user ~~to~~ that indicates a selected object;

    finding means for finding occurrences of the selected object in the pairs of ranked objects;

    determining means for determining, for each pair, an object in the pair that does not match the selected object;

    ordering means for ordering non-matching objects into a list according to the ranking number for the pair that the non-matching object belongs to; and

    output means for outputting the list as an ordered list of recommended objects.

15.   (Currently amended) In a multi-user computer system that provides user access to a database of objects, a method of recommending objects to a user computer, the method comprising:

    ~~generating on the remote computer, a data structure which stores groupings of objects known to be of interest to a community of users;~~

    identifying on a~~the~~ remote computer, a first set of objects determined to be of interest to a first user, the first set of objects identified from a plurality of objects determined to be of interest to a community of users and represented by one or more data structures;

    using a processor to accessing the one or more data structures ~~on the remote computer~~ to identify at least one ~~or more corresponding~~ sets of objects having at least a threshold ~~measure~~ of similarities in common with the first set of objects;

    generating a combined set of objects from the identified at least one ~~or more corresponding~~ sets of objects; and

    ~~providing~~transmitting to the user computer, ~~at least one of~~ the combined set of objects.

16.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 15, wherein a copy of the first set of objects is contained within the data structure.

17.   (Currently amended) The method of claim 15, wherein the ~~database of~~ objects comprises a plurality of digital audio selections.

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18.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 15, wherein the first set of objects are identified based upon user input.

19.   (Canceled)

20.   (Currently amended) The method of claim 15, wherein accessing the one or more data structures to identify at least one ~~or more corresponding~~ sets of objects ~~containing similarities with the first set of objects~~ comprises accessing the one or more data structures to identify at least one ~~or more corresponding~~ sets of objects having at least some dissimilarities with respect to the first set of objects.

21-24. (Canceled)

25.   (Currently amended) A machine readable medium having stored thereon machine executable instructions, which when executed operate to implement a method comprising:
    ~~generating a data structure which stores groupings of objects known to be of interest to a community of users;~~
    identifying a first set of objects determined to be of interest to a first user, the first set of objects identified from a plurality of objects determined to be of interest to a community of users and represented by one or more data structures;
    accessing the one or more data structures to identify at least one ~~or more corresponding~~ sets of objects having at least a threshold ~~measure~~ of similarities in common with the first set of objects;
    generating a combined set of objects from the identified at least one ~~or more corresponding~~ sets of objects; and
    ~~providing at least one of~~ displaying the combined set of objects.

26.   (Previously presented) The machine readable medium of claim 25, wherein a copy of the first set of objects is contained within the data structure.

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27.   (Previously presented) The machine readable medium of claim 25, wherein said objects comprise a plurality of digital audio selections.

28.   (Previously presented) The machine readable medium of claim 25, wherein the first set of objects are identified based upon user input.

29.   (Canceled)

30.   (Currently amended) The machine readable medium of claim 25, wherein accessing the <u>one or more</u> data structure<u>s</u> to identify one or more corresponding sets of objects containing similarities with the first set of objects comprises accessing the <u>one</u> or more data structure<u>s</u> to identify <u>at least</u> one or more corresponding sets of objects having at least some dissimilarities with respect to the first set of objects.

31-35. (Canceled)

36.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 9, wherein determining that a number of the preferred music selections match with the associated music selections in the database comprises determining that a number of preferred digital audio music titles match digital audio music titles stored in the database.

37.   (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 10, further comprising means for outputting the unmatched associated music selections.

38.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the recommended objects comprise artists' names.

39.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein a copy of the first set of objects is contained within the data structure.

40.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein the database of objects comprises a plurality of digital audio selections.

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41.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein the first set of objects are identified based upon user input.

42.   (Currently amended) In a multi-user computer system that provides user access to a database of objects, a method of recommending objects to a user, the method comprising:

generating on a~~the~~ remote computer, a data structure which stores groupings of objects known to be of interest to a community of users;

identifying ~~on the remote computer,~~ a first set of objects that are known to be of interest to a first user;

using a processor to accessing the data structure ~~on the remote computer~~ to identify at least one ~~or more corresponding~~ sets of objects having at least a threshold ~~measure~~ of similarities in common with the first set of objects; and

providing~~,~~ to a~~the~~ user computer, at least a subset of the at least one ~~of the one or more corresponding~~ sets of objects.

43. (Currently amended) The method of claim 42, wherein accessing the data structure to identify at least one ~~or more corresponding~~ sets of objects ~~containing similarities with the first set of objects~~ comprises accessing the data structure to identify at least one ~~or more corresponding~~ sets of objects having at least some dissimilarities with respect to the first set of objects.

44. (Currently amended) The method of claim 42, wherein the ~~database of~~ objects comprises a plurality of digital audio selections.

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